

PRESS CONFERENCE:

Maj. Gen. Kevin Bergner

Brig. Gen. Michael Walsh

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***REP1-6 = REPORTER 1-6**

***INT = INTERPRETER**

MAJ. GEN.: As-salaam aleikum. Good afternoon everyone.

I'm joined today by Brigadier General Mike Walsh who commands the Golf Region Division of the Core of Engineers. I have a number of issues and actions to update you on this afternoon and then General Walsh has some remarks on the reconstruction effort. In regard to the attack that you have seen in the news this morning, we strongly condemn the violent attack targeting Polish Ambassador Edward Pietrzyk's convoy this morning in Baghdad. Poland has been a strong and steadfast ally here and around the world and we commend its commitment to stable and secured Iraq. We extend our support, best wishes, and the prayers of the coalition multinational force to the ambassador, his colleagues and their families. We have been providing and continue to provide medical assistance and we stand ready to provide additional assistance as we can.

While the government of Iraq, its security forces and coalition forces continue to pressure Al-Qaida networks and operating bases, and keep them off-balance they remain a dangerous threat. On Saturday in Mosul we saw three separate but similar attacks on the Imams of the al-Hudaa, al-Sadiq and al-Suhabah mosques. We join the people of Mosul in condemning this barbaric violence against respected religious leaders during the wholly month of Ramadan and pledge to work with Iraqi authorities to bring those involved to justice.

We continue to work with Iraqi Security Forces to maintain pressure on al-Qaeda in Iraq by targeting their leadership, their networks, and their sanctuaries. During the

month of September, twenty-nine (29) senior al-Qaeda in Iraq operatives were either killed or captured. Five were Emirs at the city level or higher in the al-Qaeda leadership structure. Nine (9) were geographical or functional cell leaders and eleven (11) were facilitators who supported foreign terrorist and weapons movements. Five (5) of these senior terrorist were killed and depicted in red boxes on the slide. We have previously announced four (4) of these. Abu Usama al Tunisi who you recall was the Tunisian-born Emir of the Foreign Terrorists and the Emir of the Southern Belt who was a likely successor to al-Masri.

Yaqub al Masrim, the Egyptian-born leader, was in the inner circle with Zarqawi and then also in the inner circle of Abu Ayyub al-Masri. He was a close associate of Ayman al-Zawahiri as well. And Muhammad Al Afari, the Emir of Sinjar who led the barbaric bombings of the Yasidis in northern Iraq. And finally, Abu Taghrid was the Emir of the Rusafa car bomb network.

The fifth (5th) senior terrorist killed was named Muthanna. He was killed during operations on September 11th near Sinjar, in northwest Iraq. His death and that of seven (7) other terrorist occurred when one of the terrorists detonated a suicide vest and our forces took defensive actions. Muthanna was the Emir of Iraq and Syrian border area, and he was a key facilitator of the movement of foreign terrorists once they crossed into Iraq from Syria. He worked closely with Syrian based al-Qaeda foreign terrorists facilitators.

During this operation, we also captured multiple documents and electronic files that provided inside into al-Qaeda's foreign terrorists operations, not only in Iraq but throughout the region. They detailed the larger al-Qaeda effort to organize, coordinate, and transport foreign terrorists into Iraq and other places.

The four hundred (400) hundred plus documents, three (3) computer hard drives, two (2) thumb drives and eleven (11) compact discs at the site revealed the following:

- A list of some 500 foreign terrorists being recruited by al-Qaeda
- Biographies on a 143 foreign terrorist who were in route to Iraq or who had already arrived; including personal data, photographs, recruiter's names, and the date and route of entry into Iraq. The cam from a range of foreign countries that included Libya, Morocco, Syria, Algeria, Oman, Yemen, Tunisia, Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Belgium, France, and the United Kingdom.

Routing and the financial transactions involving the movement for each foreign terrorist were also part of this documentation. In other document that we found included a formal pledge from foreign terrorists who were committed to suicide operations.

Despite this concerted effort by al-Qaeda to bring foreigners in to terrorize Iraq, there is progress being made and it is attributable to the following actions:

- Iraqi and Coalition Forces are targeting these networks and leaders, like Muthanna, al-Tunisi and the al-Turki brothers.

- It's also attributable to the courage and vigilance of Iraqi citizens and Security Forces.

And it is also attributable to the engagement of the government of Iraq with their regional neighbors to seek broader cooperation in securing their borders and attending to the necessary security issues related to these kinds of terrorist's networks.

Defeating the foreign terrorist networks requires a sustained effort and the commitment from all of these neighbors and we support Iraq as they continue in that effort.

We're also continuing to learn a significant amount about the Iranian revolutionary guard Qods Force Officer who was detained here on September 20th, as you know, the detainee was posing as a business man with an Iranian trade delegation using the name Agha Farhadi. In reality, he is an officer in the Qods Force, and his name is Mahmud Farhadi. Farhadi was the officer in charged of the Zafr Command, one of three subordinate units of the Ramazan Corps of the Qods Force. This Corp is responsible for most of the Qods Force operations in Iraq. As the Zafr Commander, he was responsible for all Qods Force Operation in north-central Iraq that included cross border transfers of weapons, people and money. Multiple sources implicate Farhadi in providing weapon to Iraqi criminal elements and surrogate of Iran. We also know that for more than a decade he was involved in Iranian intelligence operation in Iraq.

As we have said before, we would prefer to be able to report on Iran's excellence in fulfilling their commitments to the government of Iraq, commitments to help secure the common border, eliminate the smuggling of weapons, and cease the movement of trained terrorist into Iraq. Such an effort could do much to improve the security for the Iraqi people and will be welcomed by everyone in Iraq.

Instead, we see Iran imposing economic hardship on the people of Iraq during Ramadan by closing their border in protest over the detention of a Qods Force Officer, an operative sent here to fuel the violence and who they continue to maintain is a businessman.

As Coalition and Iraqi Forces operate against the foreign threats destabilizing Iraq, the Iraqi Security Forces are also conducting increasingly effective operations of their own. Last Wednesday, the 3rd Iraqi Army Division responded to support Coalition operations against an improvised explosive device team in the vicinity of Tal' Afar. The Iraqi patrol killed two IED emplacers and repelled an ambush by another element. An investigation of the site further revealed seven IED's that were ready for emplacement which Iraqi Soldiers safely cleared.

And on Sunday, the 3rd Iraqi Division also conducted an air assault operation to interdict a vehicle moving after curfew in a known al-Qaeda transit area near Sinjar. A passenger exited the vehicle and detonated his suicide vest killing two Iraqi Army Soldiers and an interpreter. After the blast, the driver also took hostile action and was killed.

In addition to these tactical operations, Iraqi and Coalition are engaged in a range of medical and humanitarian efforts for and with Iraqi citizens. On Thursday, the New Baghdad Neighborhood Council and the Iraqi National Police provided medical supplies to hundreds of citizens of New Baghdad and the operation was enabled by the improved security climate in that neighborhood. Also on Thursday, Iraqi healthcare provider from the 2nd Brigade of the 9th Iraqi Army Division teamed up with Coalition's medics and a doctor to assist the citizens of Bassam in north Baghdad and over 200 patients were seen then.

On the economic front, the government of Iraq, the Government of Iraq continues to reach out to the provinces and to support their budgets and programs. This past Sunday, the Babil Forum was held in the provincial capital of Hillah. National leaders including Deputy Prime Minister Barham Salih and the Ministers of Finance, Defense, Industry and Minerals, Municipalities, and Electricity, along with several members of the Council of Representatives, met with the Governor and key provincial leaders to congratulate them on allocating 100% of their 2007 provincial budget. Dr. Salih applauded this progress and agreed to provide the provincial government with an additional 40 billion Iraqi dinar, about \$32 million US dollars, in financing for a small-business loan program in the province as well.

This progress underway is due to a number of factors. The Iraqi Security Forces have courageously prevented attacks from reaching their intended targets. Increasing numbers of citizens have rejected extremism and demonstrated a desire to help secure

their neighborhoods. And many of the followers of Muqtada al-Sadr have honored his declaration and stopped their violence.

As Ramadan nears completion and the celebrations surrounding Eid al Fitr draw near, we hope that this holy month has renewed the commitment of the Iraqi people towards peace and reconciliation, and we remain committed to our partnership with the people of Iraq to provide security and foster reconciliation, and we will work with all Iraqis who reject extremism and violence.

That concludes my update, and now I'll turn over the mic to General Walsh for some comments on the reconstruction effort underway. Shukran.

BRIG GEN: Thank you and good afternoon everyone. I want to thank you all for being here today. I also wanted to thank Major General Bergner for inviting me to talk about reconstruction efforts here in Iraq over the past year.

United States has contributed over \$22 billion towards Iraq reconstruction effort, and an estimate of the World Bank in 2003 said that it would be about \$80 billion to put the Iraqi infrastructure back together. Many of you have heard me say before that the U.S. contribution was intended to jumpstart the rebuilding efforts, to help the Iraqi government lay the foundations upon which to continue the rebuilding of their country. Every day we see successes in the U.S. government's reconstruction program here. Better essential services where in many places there were none. And 75% of the

country has twice as much power as it had before the war. Many of the successes are things Americans take for granted. For example, access to medical care, or to a fire station, or to a school, paved roads, clean water.

At the end of fiscal 2007 we have completed over 4,100 projects of a planned 4,700 projects. We still have another 582 projects ongoing. We have completed more than 80% of our planned projects. You can see we've been busy, very busy working alongside our Iraqi partners. Of those projects we have had a broad range throughout the country in areas of building and health, education, water, sewage, irrigation, securities and justice, transportation, communications, and oil. I'd like to talk to you about a few specific accomplishments we've had this year, in particular in oil, electricity, health care, and capacity development.

Oil and electricity are the cornerstone of the economic development in Iraq, and they are interdependent and linked. Refineries need dependable electrical power to refine fuels. Electrical generation requires high quality fuel in order to operate plants. More than 95% of Iraq's economy is fueled by oil exports. That's 95%.

The antiquated, much of dated back to the 1960s and 1970s is not efficient and has had little maintenance throughout its life span. And you can imagine if you were to drive a sports car for thirty years without changing its oil, its belts, and its filters how well it would run. It's inconceivable, but the former regime had put very few funds into the infrastructure, improvements, and maintenance. Our goal in the oil sector was clear.

We were to reach 3000 tons of liquid petroleum gas (LPG) capacity per day, three million barrels of crude oil capacity per day, and 800 million standard cubic feet of natural gas per day. In June we met those goals by completing \$1.7 billion dollars worth of projects in the oil sector. We have set our goals and continue to stay on track to meet them. You can't talk about reconstruction without talking about electricity. Obviously people are not happy unless they can flip the switch in their house and power up the lights. I understand this frustration. However, we are getting there.

As I said before our goal was to use our \$4 billion dollars in the electrical budget to achieve 12 hours of power daily nationwide. And we're now currently reaching an average of about 15 hours of power. In August we had 25 days where we exceeded 5,000 megawatts, peak megawatts. And In September, all of September was over 5,000 megawatts. But we need to understand that we're chasing an ever-growing demand and currently demand at peak is 10,000 megawatts. So we're meeting about 50% of that requirement. We've completed more than 500 electrical projects in areas of generation, transmission, and distribution, more than 80% of our planned electrical projects. The Iraqi electrical generation capacity is improving. But lack of fuels and the failure to load-shed are still issues. The government of Iraq is using this forward momentum to continue the way ahead, and Minister of Electricity Dr. Kareem has a strategic plan to get to 24 hours of power. He thinks that's going to be attainable between 2010 and 2013. We've also been making great progress in the area of health care.

The Gulf region division has turned over 64 primary health clinics to the Ministry of Health. Of those 64 that we've turned over so far, 28 of them are open to the public and are seeing patients. 12 of those primary health clinics are in Baghdad alone. The center is built to offer Iraqi's preventable medical care in their own neighborhoods, were planned to see approximately 100 patients per day. All of the open clinics are now seeing upwards of 350 patients per day, clearly filling a much needed gap. In Basra we continue the construction of the first new hospital built in the country since the 1980s, the Basra Children's Hospital, which is going to be a pediatrics-oncology facility on a thirteen-acre area. The hospital construction is expected to be completed in August 2008. And we are ensuring that our Iraqi partners are trained and ready to operate these facilities through our capacity development program. Our efforts are focused on strengthening the staff through training programs in all essential services, not only health but also electrical power plants, water plants, transportation, and communication facilities.

We develop programs to ensure that women have equal opportunities for jobs and contracts in the reconstruction arena. In 2007 the U.S. Army awarded 742 contracts totaling \$75 million to women-owned businesses. I'd say that program is working. We're also working on the renovation of seven vocational centers to aid in the development of the nation's workforce with skilled labors, tradesmen, and technicians. So you can see the U.S. government's program is yielding positive, tangible results in everyday reconstruction. And we continue to do so. As I change command next week, I'll hand over the reins to the Gulf Region Division to Brigadier General Jeff

Dorko. And I'm proud of the accomplishments of the works of the volunteers that are in the Gulf Region Division. Everyday I see first hand the drive and determination of our military men and women, our civilian, contractors, and Iraqi associates who continue to put their lives on the line everyday for this worthy task. I am humbled and I am grateful for their sacrifices, and also for the sacrifices of their families back home to ensure our endeavors are successful. I'm proud to have been part of this historic endeavor and leave here with a heavy heart but recognize under the leadership of General Dorko the mission will continue. Thank you for your interest in this important part of Iraq's future and thank you General Bergner for allowing me to join you today.

MAJ GEN: I just want to say personal thanks to Mike for his service here. And I've served with him a couple other times over the years. And he's done a great job for the Iraqi people and the coalition at large. So we wish you well and Godspeed. With that, we will transition, and I'll be glad to take your questions. Sir.

ENGEL: Thank you very much. This is Richard Engel from NBC. Just a follow-up on the Farhadi detention. You talked about him today. Is he the most senior al-Qods that the U.S. is holding? What specifically did he do? And we've heard reports that there are now proposals that Iran is floating the idea of trying to secure his release in exchange for some concessions and that those discussions are being brokered by the Iraqis. Can you confirm that? Thank you.

MAJ GEN Well, first, what we know he was involved in was the coordination to bring weapons into Iraq to support extremists here with financing and to support them with training as well. He did that in a specified area that we refer to as the Zafar command's area of the Ramazan core. That's in the north central part of Iraq. We have seen a number of EFP attacks in that area. We have actually found and cleared a number of EFPs just over the last year, for example on that area. So we know the EFPs were part of that effort. And there were some 2,000 indirect fire attacks that were also made in that area over the past year. So the provision of weapons, the training, and the necessary support for extremists to employ those is what we have seen from these networks in the past and what he was involved in as well.

We continue to investigate and learn more about the activities he was involved in. We are, as you would expect us to do, we are focused on exploiting that information and helping it to enable future operations. But we will, as we develop more information about it we will share that and be forthcoming about it. The last part of your question, Richard?

ENGEL: There were two questions. Thank you. Is he the most senior al-Qods operative currently in custody? How many are in custody? And are there negotiations underway, proposals by the Iranian authorities to secure his release, with Iraq acting as an intermediary that may have gone all the way up to General Petraeus?

MAJ GEN: Yeah, he is certainly a very senior member of the Qods force, and how he compares relative to the five other Iranian operatives that are in our custody, as you remember were detained in Irbil in January of this year, I'm not sure I can further characterize him compared to them at this point in time. If I am able to I'll follow up with you and provide that information. And the last part of your question was?

ENGEL: Negotiations. Is Iran trying to secure his release by offering concessions? We'll slow up the flow of EFPs. In exchange give us back our businessman, as they're calling him.

MAJ GEN: I don't know what Iran is doing. I know that we are not engaged in discussions of that kind. Yes, sir.

REP1: The United Iraqi Alliance, which is I think is still the largest block in Parliament, put out a statement yesterday which criticized the tribal awakenings and concerned citizens groups and specifically said that they are taking security acts without government authorization and without government knowledge. Is that criticism justified? I mean do the concerned citizens groups...to what extent do they need to be approved by Iraqi officials in the area? At any point do they go up to an Iraqi chain of command or are they are entirely responsible to the U.S. military chain of command?

MAJ GEN: First of all, it's important to note that the development of these concerned citizen groups at the local level is something that is significantly contributing to

improvements in the security situation at the local level. The decisions of these Iraqi citizens to stop fighting with al-Qaeda and start working with their own security forces and the coalition is an important step. It's an important step towards improving security. It's an important step towards improving the conditions for reconciliation to go forward. As we have worked with those groups, and I would point out both Sunni and Shia groups, comprise those concerned local citizens, as we have done that, we have done that in conjunction with the government of Iraq and we have done it in conjunction with their security forces. The most important component of this is to help these individuals step away from the extremists that they were working with and help them begin working with the legitimate security forces of their country under the control of their government. That involves a number of steps. The first one is make the decision. The second one is organize them in such a way that they can start contributing to the security in their neighborhood. At the same time, it's important for them to be integrated and connected to their own security forces. And then eventually offer them the opportunity to matriculate, take the necessary training after they've been appropriately screened and vetted to join the security forces of Iraq. That's the process that's in place. It's underway. There's some 1700 members of the Abu Ghraib community who've made all of those steps and gone from working with insurgents to being screened and vetted and being accepted into legitimate security forces of their country. It's going on in other districts of Baghdad as well. So I would say, first of all, the government of Iraq is very much involved in that process. And we are committed to being very transparent and respectful of the government of Iraq's position on all of that. So I think it's important to acknowledge first of all that the

Prime Minister has made statements and has specifically given guidance to support these efforts in a number of provinces. And he has courageously embraced this effort, and he has courageously reached out to leaders up north and out west. And so I think that he deserves great respect for the leadership he has shown and continues to show. And we will continue to work very closely with him and his government down the path that I just described. Thanks. Tina?

SUSMAN: Thanks. Tina Susman Los Angeles Times. Can you tell us more about the attack on the Polish Ambassador? Specifics, how many vehicles? Is there any indication that the attack was aimed at the private security vehicles with him? Or do you suspect it was an actual assassination attempt on the ambassador?

MAJ GEN: Tina, it's only about four hours from the time I think that it took place. So we're still very close to the actual attack. There's a great deal of effort underway, as you would expect, to help provide for those that were injured. And that's been our focus. I don't have any detailed information for you on the specifics of the attack. It's under investigation. We'll work very closely with the Polish government to assist them in that regard. And we'll continue to obviously provide the medical assistance that we're currently providing for the ambassador and three of his colleagues that are in our combat support hospital receiving medical care.

RICHARD: Can you at least sketch out the broad lines? There are many conflicting reports. Can you at least sketch out the broad lines of what you know to have happened? Because there have been many quite contradicting reports

MAJ GEN: Richard, on one level I want to make sure that the government of Poland and the Polish embassy address this and I don't get in front of them, if you will. And we will follow up with you with more detailed information as it becomes available and supporting that. Yes, sir.

AFP: Brian from AFP. Could you detail the nature of injuries of the ambassador? Also confirm he was transported in a Blackwater helicopter to the hospital.

MAJ GEN: I would defer on the specific medical status to his government to characterize his medical condition. I understand that there was U.S. embassy helicopter that supported some evacuation from the scene of the attack. Yes, sir. Shukran.

REP3: Asking question in Arabic.

INT: The security, what do you actually attribute the security in progress now? Is it because of the joint security operations between the Iraqi and American forces or is it attributed to the new successful political operations during the last couple of months?

MAJ GEN: I think you've actually summarized very well that it's a number of different factors that are contributing to some of the progress. I think first and foremost is the courage of the Iraqi people. Iraqi citizens are stepping forward in their neighborhoods. They're working more closely with their security forces. They're working more closely with coalition forces. And I think that their courage is what's enabling the continued progress. Certainly the coalition and Iraqi forces efforts to reestablish population security and improve that in neighborhoods and communities is facilitating that courage because it's giving the confidence. It's giving them the capability to work more closely and consistently with their forces and the coalition. I think that the willingness of volunteers to step forward and actually help protect their neighborhoods is a contributing factor as well. And then there have been steps by the political leaders to encourage that and to reinforce that and to provide the necessary economic development that should follow those kinds of security improvements so the Iraqi citizens see some tangible improvements in their lives. And so I think all of those factors are very important ones. And they all work together, if you will. Shurkan. Okay, this is General Walsh's last press conference after a year here. Any questions? I'm sorry. Yes, sir.

PRICE: Jay Price of McClatchy. General Walsh, I don't know if you can do this province by province. But could you give us some sense of how that 15 hours average electricity's kind of broken across the country?

BRIG GEN: Most of the power is now either distributed around the country except for Baghdad.

So we have out in al-Anbar about 22 hours of power, down in Basra about 22-24, up in Dahuk, Irbil in the 20s. In Baghdad we have about ten hours of power. And what we're looking for is to put additional generation into the Baghdad loop. And so we've got some more generation going into Musayyib and Kudus that will bring more megawatts into the Baghdad loop and we'll be able to get Baghdad up to the 12-15 hours of power as well.

PRICE: And just a follow up on that. Security seems to have improved in many areas across the country lately. Has that had any effect on the attacks on the electrical grid?

BRIG GEN: It has. I think the towers going down that we had some significant problems with last year; we have less of that this year. But I think also the increase in electrical generation it's also been putting more generation on line, doing maintenance, and training the Iraqis on how to run the new systems that we've put in place for them. Thank you. Yes, sir.

REP3: Yeah, the numbers that were given of Dahuk and Irbil in the 20s, I would guess Baghdad for ten hours...really don't match what just sort of anecdotal, my experience in Baghdad. And I know it probably differs from neighborhood to neighborhood. But also just sort of anecdotal evidence talking to people. People, at least over the summer, you speak to someone in Irbil and I think they were saying they were getting less than 12 hours a day. Ninawa was getting something...I forget the numbers...but

something like certainly less...almost consistently when you ask people, and I realize anecdotal evidence is not perfect, you're people say about six hours, eight hours a day. And that's northern Iraq and central Iraq. I can't say southern Iraq. Is there any reason why power generating would not be distributed equally? I mean are those sort of aggregate numbers that wouldn't necessarily reach all neighborhoods that you'd have...would industry sort of be getting more...is there any reason that sort of...I know my anecdotal evidence is not, you know, undoubtable, not ironclad...but it really doesn't jive with what people sort of, how they sum up their power situation.

BRIG GEN: Right. And we have been chasing that anecdotal information to a number of different areas. And when I say that there's ten hours of power into Baghdad or twenty into Irbil, that's how much electricity is in to that particular town. Now that town may not get it evenly distributed. In particular essential services are getting 24 hours of power. So the hospitals, the police stations, sewer pump stations, the water treatment plants are getting 24 hours of power. So they'll get the first levels of power and then the remaining parts of the community will get what's left. And so it is possible that the city is getting ten hours of power but a particular area may be getting four. Yes, sir.

REP4: Asking question in Arabic.

INT: Question to General Walsh. The Ministry of Electricity says that the militias control the power plant distribution. Can the power plants be supplied or protected by the NAF? How could you control this or how could you help?

BRIG GEN: I think what the minister was talking about was load-shedding. And to distribute the power equally across the country he will call down to a switch yard and tell the people who are running that to turn the power off to a particular area so he can move it to different parts of the country. For a number of different reasons, the guy who's at that switch gear may or may not follow that instruction. Now he has security forces that are assigned to him, but he's also working with the provincial governor to also keep an eye on that and see if they can help distribute the power equally across the country.

REP5: Speaking in Arabic. Could you give us the name again of the MA who was killed, the fifth one?

MAJ GEN: Muthanna. His name is Muthanna, and I'll get you his full name. Yeah, Richard.

RICHARD: Sir, just going back to the Iran question. You talked about how Iran's influence sending in EFPs and the people to help train in their deployment has been increasing. Yet we've heard from the Iraqi government, specifically from the Prime Minister, that it is decreasing and quote "ceases to exist." That doesn't appear to be found out in the evidence that you're seeing.

MAJ GEN: Let me address it this way. And I mentioned this in my remarks. First of all, we welcome the public commitments that have been made and other commitments that may have been made, specifically to the Prime Minister by his colleagues or

counterparts from Iran. And we would very much welcome the chance to actually see those being fulfilled and be able to report on discernible and statistically significant improvements that we could see. And we look forward to that. We hope that is the case. What I said was we haven't seen that. And what we have seen, for example, this Qods force officer continuing to be involved in the kinds of activities that we can relate back to what Ali Musa Daqduq, who was a Lebanese Hezbollah operative who was a surrogate operating here on behalf of the Qods force. Kais Kazali, who was the former commander of the special groups with a relationship with Qods force network that supported his operations. And so those activities, those relationships, and the flow of weapons, indirect fire attacks, EFP attacks, we look forward to seeing a decline in those. And it may take some time to see them if the government of Iran actually fulfills their commitment. It may take some time before they become statistically significant. And so the commitments that have been made will play out, and we'll see. And we look forward to being able to tell you that we see some discernible improvement that's consistent with the commitments that were made.

RICHARD: There are more than six though, the other names. I'm just trying to get a number, or a number of scale even, of the number of Iranians related to the Qods force that are currently in U.S. custody. I know there was the Irbil five, and then there was Farhadi from Sulaymaniyah. And then there are others. There's Daqduq and Kais. How many others are there?

MAJ GEN: Oh you're asking me a different question. I got you. Let me explain it his way Richard. I thought you asked me specifically Qods force officers. And that's the number I was referring to. That would be Farhadi and the Irbil five. The other individuals, the Lebonese Hezbollah operative is a Lebonese national who was here at the behest of, as a proxy if you will, for the Qods force network, doing their operations. Kais Kazali is an Iraqi citizen who was then the commander of the special groups operating principally in Baghdad and southern Iraq, supported by that network of Qods force support. So those were the individuals...that's an accurate summary. But remember that the Irbil five and Farhadi are the six that are actual Qods force officers in our detention. Sorry?

RICHARD: Six plus two.

MAJ GEN: That are not Iranians. That's what I wanted to be clear about. Okay, I want to close up by saying thank you again to Brigadier General Mike Walsh for his service, for all that he's done for Multinational Force throughout Iraq and in particular for the people of Iraq, the citizens of Iraq, and the government of Iraq who he has partnered with selflessly and so effectively. Mike, we thank you again and we just wish you Godspeed.

BRIG GEN: Thanks, sir. I appreciate that.

MAJ GEN: Thanks everybody. Ma'assalama.